The

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

No. 74 AUGUST, 1913. PRICE ONE PENNY. 1s. 6d. per annum post free

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Notes of the Month.

Some time ago we expressed the hope in these columns that all our vacant pulpits would speedily find occupants, and bring our ministry up to full strength. Unfortunately events have recently transpired which indefinitely postpone that desired consummation. The first is the death of the Rev. W. E. Mellone, of Warrenpoint, one of our eldest and most-esteemed ministers. Although his period of work in the North of Ireland was not long, yet he came to this country rich in experience and wise in counsel. He had won our affection, both for his qualities of head and heart, and also because of his work's sake. We shall greatly miss him, but we naturally think of the greater loss sustained by his son and daughter, and tender to them our heartfelt sympathy. A second event which will create another vacancy, is the acceptance by the Rev. Thomas Munn of a call to the Padiham Church, in Lancashire. In a real and racial sense he was one of us, and while we wish him every success across the water, his place here will not easily be filled. However, we hope soon to hear that arrangements may be made both at Warrenpoint and Greyabbey for the successful carrying on of our cause.

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For many years it has been felt that central accommodation in Belfast would be most advantageous for the varied activities of our Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church. We cannot, of course, expect the provision of large and extensive premises such as those possessed by our friends of the General Assembly. But a place where visitors to town might go, and where ministers and laity might hold converse together, has been a desideratum. Hence, we are glad to be able to announce that through the kindness of the First Presbyterian congregation, Rosemary Street, Belfast, a large room in the Central Hall property has been offered for such purposes as the above, and we shall enter into possession immediately. Through the kindness of one public-spirited layman, the rent has been paid for a year, by the end of which the room will have proved itself of such use that there should be no difficulty in finding a sum sufficient for its maintenance in succeeding years.

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Persecution for heresy seems to savour of past rather than present conditions. But the members of the Wes-

leyan Conference, meeting last month at Plymouth, had found still alive the spirit which has a keen scent for the least departure from the normal in religion. Because the Rev. George Jackson, who recently gave up professorial duties in Toronto to undertake similar work in Didsbury College, Manchester, expressed in his Fernley Lecture views on inspiration which most thoughtful people now hold, some conservative and obscurantist members of his community were actively, if not vehemently, seeking to make null his recent appointment. It would appear that they were in a minority, and therefore the decision of the Conference frustrated their purpose. But that the latter should be even conceived is so curious. The fact is, that there are still Protestants who in theory uphold the right of private judgment in matters of religion, yet who in practice act thus : Every man has a right to believe what they believe, but failing that, let him be be anathema as a heretical person.

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In contrast to such mistaken and belated opinions, it is a relief to think of the general change in point of view which has made it possible for men of different lands and religious points of view to assemble at such a Congress as that held in Paris towards the end of last month. Only the recognition of the true meaning and scope of religious liberty could hold together in unity of spirit and the bond of peace all the divergencies of opinion which undoubtedly exist in such an International Conference. But it does not occur to those listening to views that are singular, because the outcome of unlike conditions of religious descent and environment, that the holders of such views should be hounded down and silenced. Rather does it suggest an opportunity to perceive and learn that

> God moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform ;

and by thus listening to and learning from each other, it becomes ever plainer that freedom, real and unrestricted, is the very life-breath of religious progress everywhere.

SERMON

Preached in the First Presbyterian Church, Belfast, on Tuesday Evening, 17th June, on the occasion of the Annual Meeting of the General Synod.

By Rev. T. Dunkerley, B.A.

" Seek that you may abound unto the edifying of the Church."—I. Cor. xiv. 12.

A SLIGHT paraphrase will help to a clearer apprehension of the Apostle's words. What Paul says is : " Seek to have spiritual gifts to the full that you may do your part in the building up of the Church."

And on this Fourth Annual Meeting of our re-constructed Church, I would have all members, ministers, and laity alike, receive this exhortation.

The full advantage of our comparatively new organisation will be achieved only by the earnest co-operation of all. The welfare of our Church is a trust laid upon minister and people. Each member is called upon to discharge it faithfully. Let us seek then to have spiritual gifts that we may do our part in the building up of our Church. How can we do our part to help our Church ?

There is no reason why our adopted form of government should not be sufficiently elastic to embrace the good which may be found in other systems. We have experienced, and have doubt less gained much from Congregationalism.

We cannot forget that most Christians are Episcopalians. The distinguishing feature in that economy is the system of overseeing. It is the duty of the Bishop, as his name implies, to visit and oversee the churches of his diocese. Does this oversight commend itself to us as worthy of our consideration ?

It is remarkable that in the early days of the establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland it was deemed advisable to appoint a class of ministers who were called *Superintendents*. In the Assembly of 1561 it was declared

that when God had raised up men of singular gifts and graces it was not for the welfare of the Church, nor for the glory of God, that they be kept closely and continuously in one place. But that, while remaining settled pastors of congregations, they should from time to time travel through the provinces allotted to them, stirring up the brethren, inquiring into the state of religion, and reporting thereon to Synods and Assemblies, and thus bring their gifts and experience to bear on the whole Church. In one of the *Books of Discipline* it is said: "Those men must not be suffered to live as your idle bishops have done hitherto, neither must they remain where they gladly would, but they must be preachers to the whole Church, and counsellors of their brethren. On their visitations they must preach thrice every week at least . . . . . and they must not only preach, but examine the life, diligence, and behaviour of the ministers, as well as the order of the kirks and the manners of the people. They must consider further, how the poor be provided for, and how the youth be instructed."

Such an office seems hardly consistent with the principle of Presbyterian equality. Yet the Superintendent was to be in all respects subject to the same rule as his brethren, and in election he was strictly charged: "Usurpe not dominion nor tyrannical authority over thy brethren."

As the working of Presbyteries became fully developed, the need for this office grew less and it disappeared. The difficulty of finding capable men who could be spared from their charges for the work would, doubtless, favour the change. And so visitation and superintendence became the duty of the Presbyteries.

The Scottish Assembly in 1638 enacted that every congregation was to be visited by a Presbytery or a deputation thereof once a year. The minister was to preach in his usual course and usual manner. The heritors, elders, and whole congregation were summoned to be present; and after worship the minister, elders, and heads of families do attend the Presbytery to acquaint them with the state of the congregation on every point. The records of the congregation were examined, the elders were interrogated as to their minister's behaviour and efficiency. Questions peculiarly searching, yet perhaps not very different from what a conscientious man must put to himself, were asked: "Hath your minister a gospel walk and conversation among his people? Bears he familiar company with disaffected, profane, and scandalous persons? Is he at variance with any? Is there any that reproach him, and on what ground? Is he constant in his congregational work? Doth he visit the sick, the aged, the widow, the poor?"

We may view what is here suggested with an amount of suspicion as an interference with individual liberty. And there are aspects in which it might prove meddlesome. But among devoted brethren who are seeking spiritual gifts to do their part in the building up of the Church only helpfulness, and not impertinence, can find place. It is surely the earnest desire of us all that our Church should be without spot or blemish.

In the development of our chosen system of government we must seek to form and to strengthen a living bond between each congregation and the whole Church, so that there shall be no outlying community, no distant outpost of our faith, that shall not be warmly recognised and derive loyal sympathy and vital help from the central body. The hindrances of each outlying cause, and its advantages, its harassments, and its achievements should be known, sympathetically considered and appreciated, and then, as the case may need, be corrected or directed. The power, the resources, the intellect, and the spiritual energy of the whole Church should be exerted for the benefit of every part.

Are there evils, we must correct them; are there abuses, we must reform them; is there lack of life, we must seek to infuse it. Congregations must be saved from the injury of incompetent, indolent, or immoral ministers.

We are seeking to arouse the generosity of our members in the formation of a Sustentation Fund. Let us take care that that generosity is not checked by any apprehension that it may result in riveting an undesirable burden on some long-suffering congregation.

Presbyteries must be constantly aroused to a clearer sense of their responsibilities and to a fearless and faithful discharge of their duties. All human institutions need regular or periodic stimulation to the conscientious fulfilment of their purpose. The General Synod must keep Presbyteries alive to their duty, must direct, strengthen, inspire.

In the building up of our Church we must never forget that, at its best, outward organisation is but a secondary means. It is a *Christian* Church, and should possess or be possessed by the spirit of Christ. The early Christians on the death of their Master took steps, which resulted in the formation of a society or church. At first they sought means to renew and continue their intercourse with each other, in memory of the happier time to which they looked back with living interest. Jesus himself, it is apparent, enjoyed the genial and affectionate companionship of his disciples, for he could speak of them in such endearing terms as his "little flock," his "children," as those whom "he had chosen out of the world," yea, as "his mother and his brother." And it must indeed have been a *glad* time as he instructed them in the things pertaining to "the kingdom" and endeavoured to bring them to the living consciousness of the living God, their Father. No wonder, then, that when their connection was so tragically ended they should longingly recall the joyous community of comrades led and inspired with noble aims by their trusted and beloved Master. No wonder that they met again filled with affectionate remembrances of their happy intercourse, and tried to continue the life of discipleship with its living interest and genial sweetness and spiritual encouragement. And is there not something there from which we may learn?

The pleasant helpfulness and truly idyllic condition which the disciples had enjoyed coloured, yea, gave a special character to, their ideas of association. The blissful memory influenced their subsequent union. And so, in those earliest Christian communities we recognise a fellowship, a *koinonia*, so intimate and mutually helpful as to distinguish their society from others. In the first epistle of John we read:—"We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren." Indications of the helpful fellowship are seen in the names they gave to each other: Disciples (learners), brethren, saints, the faithful, the elect. We may trace something of the pervading spirit in the use of the word *Pagan*, civilian, for a non-Christian, to distinguish from a soldier (*miles*) of Christ, as the latter was pledged by the *sacramentum* of his baptismal vow. Yet another indication is the fact that Christians were popularly charged with hatred of civilised society; and even the existence and severity of Roman persecution testifies to the closeness of their bond, for it was as members of an exclusive and potentially dangerous society that they were proceeded against. Their life of strict obedience and mutual allegiance caused them to be suspected. With regard to opinions, the Roman Government was tolerant. Sir W. Ramsay says that the people "did not care two straws whether men worshipped 20 gods or 21." Christians were persecuted not so much for individual beliefs as for being members of a society which was closely united under an undivided allegiance. And yet the persecution was wide-spread. As Harnack says: "the sword of Damocles hung over every Christian's neck."

These are testimonies that to embrace Christianity involved a close bond of union with the brethren and a devotion of life to high things that marked them off from others.

Is it not then worth our while to consider whether or not we can still realise something of that happy and helpful and devoted fellowship in our Church membership?

We do not make enough of our membership, neither in what we give nor in what we receive.

Religion is not merely individual: it has its corporate side also. There must, of course, be individual effort. Each must receive the truth and make his personal response to it. In other words, religion is, in the first place, the relation of the soul to God. But it does not end there. For man is a social being. The hermit, the isolated man, is a monstrosity. Our common relation to the Head involves also a common relation to each other in the body. Religion is kept alive and propagated by the contact of mind with mind and heart with heart.

Membership, then, is no mere vague and feeble sentiment: it involves obligation and sacrifice. We owe something to our fellow-members.

Jesus spoke of "counting the cost" and "taking up the cross." In the expression of our text we must seek to possess the needful spiritual gifts, though it cost us time and thought and effort to acquire them, and when they are acquired we must use them in "building up the Church."

We associate to give one another mutual encouragement and sympathy and help in our highest aspirations and endeavours. In the Church it is spiritual fellowship that we seek, and, therefore, we must bring sympathy, earnestness, warm desires, and that "musing heart within which goodness glows." Each is responsible for the warmth of the spiritual atmosphere. The Church is the channel through which the life of many flows into one fulness of expression. The most real and touching of all incitements to religion, the true ministrations of God, come from the presence and the testimony of our fellow-men, bringing their varied experiences, moved by a common sentiment, avowing a common hope, and looking to the one great Leader of our souls.

So our members should be fellow-worshippers or fellow-workers when together, and of one heart when apart.

Our Church exists, primarily, as a means of surrounding the human souls gathered in it with faith in God, yea, with the living consciousness of God, "in whom we live and move and have our being"; for this is the atmosphere in which all that is good in man grows. We realise our vital relationship with the All-good, the central Life of the universe, and, opening our hearts in the genial air, an inflow of divine power inspires to follow the truth and do the right, and we are used by Him as a means to "build up the Church," which has been called "the kingdom of God in the making."

When we look beyond the bounds of our own Church our separate existence seems justified. We almost perceive the action of the fire which is trying every man's work and faith. A recent Bampton lecturer describes the present condition of affairs as one of "religious chaos." There is unrest on all sides. But it is an unrest accompanied by hopeful signs of yearning for nearer fellowship. This longing desire is indeed checked in many minds by the vague fear of treason to what they imagine to be Christian truth. And while men are debating as to the modicum of truth, or perhaps we should say the quantity of dogma, to which subscription must be required, the opportunity of union may slip away.

We cannot but feel a sympathetic interest in the truly *modern* efforts for federation and unity of Churches. The evils resulting from the multiplication of sects are manifest. The story is told of a Japanese nobleman being urged to consider the claims of Christianity while he was crossing the public square of Tokio. Sweeping his hand around the square, where there are at least a dozen different Christian missionary agencies, he asked: "Which Christianity?"

The very desire for union indicates a great change in the religious world of to-day. It was not always so.

Milton (Areopagitica), for example, rejoices at the increasing number of schisms, describing it as men taking up the ill-deputed care of their religion into their own hands again.

Time was when the Church was united, when there was a single organisation for the whole Western World. But those were the "Dark Ages," the darkest period of Christendom. And the noblest spirits had to fight through schism to liberty.

Union may be purchased at too great a cost. Concurrence—present concurrence in theological opinion—is no stable basis for union. The human mind and human thought and the human world are constantly growing, and theological opinions must change and grow in accordance. Union through the weakening of the requirements only postpones the inevitable breaking away again of the progressing mind of man.

And so we find our Non-Subscribing position justified, and we hold that with unfettered minds men can unite on the ground of conscious sameness of spiritual relations.

We rejoice to see movements, in this our day, surely, if indirectly, tending in the direction of union.

Churches differing in theology are no longer open enemies. No longer does each sect deem itself the one ark of safety, and claim to enshrine the only hope for this world and the next. Once the Churches were bitterly hostile, and would resort to physical means of repression, then came the time when

> The war and waste of clashing creeds
> Now ends in words and not in deeds.

Next came the age of toleration, of which this generation has had experience. And now in these later days we see another step forward in the budding desire and willingness to co-operate. Men are learning, as never before, that Christians who differ dogmatically may join in good work on behalf of justice, mercy, and truth among men. Fraternal co-operation among the Churches for the benefit of the poor and neglected in *this present life* is a new and pleasing feature of our day. Theology no longer appeals deeply to men ; but, at this hour, it is philanthropy, the work that will feed, clothe, teach, and raise the suffering and the sunken, and stirs to enthusiasm. And co-operation in such truly Christian work on which members of various communions are entering must unconsciously draw them nearer to one another in heart and spirit. Mutual appreciation will lead to the fulfilment of the law of love, which is the very spirit of Christ. Self-denying labour on behalf of others is the true mark of discipleship, and in whomsoever it is perceived he must be recognized as a true member of the Church of Christ. In this direction is to be found a sure and unfailing means of bringing in the Kingdom which our common Master preached. In other words, the Churches are finding out that they can be *allies*. To be allies in a worthy cause makes confederation possible. And confederation tends towards union.

Would that men could see that union, though still far off, is possible, yes, possible, without any unlawful surrender, without any intolerable sacrifice.

To effect union there must be, it is true, the surrender of something. But no man should be asked to surrender honest conviction, or freedom to find the truth, or even be bound to keep his present intellectual position.

What, then, is the surrender that is legitimate ? It is no far-off and almost impossible achievement, but the gift that every Christian possesses.

It is the first act of sincere devotion, the merging of self-will in the divine will, the breathing from the heart of the prayer taught by Christ : "Thy will be done." This is involved in all true religion. And this, too, is the indispensable condition of true Christian union. When Christians, rising above the dogmas which divide men, shall enter into the inner harmonies of divine communion, differences between soul and soul melt away, and there is no surrender of one to another, but of all to God. Signs prophetic of such union are discerned in our day by the eye of hope, and we are encouraged in our witness. Meanwhile let us, faithful to principles, leave the results to the Supreme Ruler, and seek to have spiritual gifts to the full that we may do our part in building up our Church as the most effective and surest means towards unifying the true Church of the living God.

SUNDAY SCHOOL REFORM.

By Mrs. Slipper.

An extract from a paper read at the Sunday School Conference held in Dunmurry on Saturday, 7th June.

There are other methods I have heard and read of which are used in several orthodox schools, although originating in some of the American schools belonging both to the Unitarian and Universalist Church. One of these is the Cradle Roll. A month ago I was privileged to visit a Congregational Church and Sunday School in which this Roll is used. When a child is baptised the Superintendent of the School has a record of the name, etc., given to him. This he enters on the Cradle Roll, which hangs in the school room. A small blue enamelled brooch is presented to the parents for the child, with the words Cradle Roll inscribed on it. These brooches are very inexpensive, costing about 8s. 6d. or 9s. per hundred.

This is not all, however, for an interest is taken in the child, and a birthday card is sent to it as each anniversary comes round: the parents also are visited occasionally by one of the teachers who undertake this part of the work. When the child becomes of suitable age, say four or five years old, the parents are reminded that the Minister and Superintendent would like it to attend school. On its first appearance among the other scholars a little service is held to welcome it, and a hymn of welcome is sung by all. Also a small gilt star is attached to the Roll beside the child's name. The birthday card is then discontinued. If so be the child dies before it is old enough to attend school or afterwards reference is made in school in a sympathetic and simple manner, and a small gilt crown is placed over the name of the child on the roll. It is by such means as these that losses are prevented, and both school and Church are able to keep in touch with the parents and children.

Another method which I saw adopted with success in a Presbyterian Sunday School is what is known as the Star Class Chart. With some slight alterations this chart might be used in many ways. It is designed to encourage five very desirable things for the school, viz., constant and punctual attendance, bringing own Bibles, offerings, new members, and lesson study. In the first column on the left the number of the class, and in the second column the teacher's name are placed. At the right of the teacher's name are placed under their respective headings—(*a*) a red star if the teacher and all the members of the class are present. (Illness or the unavoidable absence of any scholar does not disqualify the class from receiving the star.) (*b*) A blue star if the teacher and each member of the class present bring their own Bibles. (*c*) A gilt star if each make an offering. (*d*) A red star if a new member be secured by any member of the class for any part of the school. (*e*) A blue star if each member reports having read the lesson at home, and brings the golden text written out. The stars, by a simple mechanical device, are readily attached and detached, and are changed to show the record for each Sunday. If the stars are left in place the chart will show the record at the opening of the school for the preceding Sunday, and should be changed by the secretary during the lesson study to show the standing of each class for that day.

Still another method I heard of recently is the Roll of Honour for faithful attendance. My time is so limited that I cannot stop to explain this as fully as I should like, but briefly it is this. A prettily designed card, with spaces for two hundred names, which should be written on the card by a good penman. The attendance is marked quarterly by coloured seals on the roll. The card lasts four years. When mounted and suitably framed it is an ornament to any school, and some schools need ornamentation badly. There is no doubt that this device would tend to encourage regular attendance. Again, when the scholars

come to riper years, and cease to attend Sunday School, or after removal to other centres visit their own town or village again, the roll will bring back to memory many reminiscences of the old class and teacher in their Sunday School days.

Then if each teacher could organize his or her own class in such a way that all the scholars would feel responsible for it, how much it would help that class? Each one would not then feel that he or she was a mere unit, but all would feel organized into a whole. The organization could be very simple. Each class could have a motto, and also wear some simple badge or device, such as a pin. Definite work could be undertaken either in connection with the school, or for some charitable or benevolent object. Real co-operation among the members of each class would then be felt, and we all know that co-operation is the best guarantee of efficiency and success.

Also I think that in the senior classes particularly the method of inviting the scholars to subscribe a small amount regularly, say once a month, might be more generally adopted. Not only would the School Committee have means for the proper equipment of the work, but it would prove excellent as a means of educating the scholars to support the religious work of the Church, and also make them value the school. Anything that is easily gained is never sufficiently valued. But if you will bear with me just a minute or two longer I should like to speak of a matter which I know concerns every teacher of senior classes.

In many schools great difficulty is found in keeping the young men, and it is a problem that might well occupy a place on the programme of some future Conference. I can only suggest now very briefly some ways that seem to help towards the solution of the problem, and I offer the suggestion as another method of reform which might be tried, and, if found successful, adopted. This question of the attendance of young men in the Sunday School to-day rests upon another of equal importance, viz.:—How are we going to get competent teachers for our young men? Solve that question, and you have found the solution of the chief difficulty of the problem. Teachers, like preachers, are born, not made, and personality, when it is right, covers a multitude of minor imperfections. Certainly it counts in regard to the young men's class. Our young men do not require pampering, but they must be made to feel that the interest of the teacher is genuine, that is to say, that it is more than a passing interest of one hour on Sunday, that it is more than the official Sunday School interest, and is really heartfelt.

The successful teacher, who need not be a man—for women rank among the most successful teachers of young men—must try to make the interest of every scholar in the class his or her own. Occasional invitations to the home for tea and talk upon matters connected with a young man's ideals—be they religious, or studious, or even bearing upon sport that is healthy—would also tend to create a friendship that counts and holds. The namby-pamby type of teacher, or even the ultra religious teacher, is out of place here, for one thing that blights a young man's taste for Sunday School is too much religion. (I hope nobody will be shocked at this statement, but I am convinced that too much religion in this direction is as bad as too little.) And further, the teacher should develop as far as possible the use of discussion upon topics of general interest. By this means the faculty of thought would be strengthened and self-reliance in speaking in class, or even at meetings, encouraged.

I offer these suggestions, fully conscious of the difficulties that they present, but we must remember that the difficulties of attaining success are no greater than those of failure.

A splendid future lies before us, and it is our duty to meet its opportunities. In all our work, and whatever our methods, we must have some definite object in view. Then shall our work be done better and have more effective results. The rewards of Sunday School work are so great and so valuable that it is a wonder to me so much difficulty

is experienced in getting teachers. The work is infinitely worth while, and to those who sometimes despair of their efforts, and feel discouragement too, may these words of a sweet singer inspire them and give new zeal to the effort :—

"Oh, struggling soul, be brave and full of cheer
Nor let your holy purpose swerve or break ;
The way grows smoother and the light more clear
At every step you take.
So, in the upward path God's boundless love
Supports you evermore upon your way ;
You cannot fail to reach the heights above
Who climb as best you may.

OBITUARY.

REV. WILLIAM EDWARD MELLONE.

We regret to announce the death of Rev. William Edward Mellone, who passed away somewhat suddenly at his residence, "The Hermitage," Warrenpoint, on Monday afternoon, 30th June. The deceased gentleman, whose health had not been of a robust character for some time past, had reached an advanced age. He was born seventy-seven years ago at Thame, near Oxford, and was educated at King's College, London. At the time of his demise he had been fifty-two years in the ministry, including four years spent in the Congregational body (1860-64).

During his Unitarian career he held pastorates in Toledo, Ohio, Portsmouth, Liverpool, Kidderminster, Devonport, Bessel's Green, and Tunbridge Wells, where he was chiefly instrumental in gathering a new congregation. For the past seventeen years he was minister of the Unitarian Congregation at Warrenpoint, and he had been Clerk to the Presbytery of Armagh for the last twelve years, and four years Clerk to the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster. In addition to holding these offices in connection with the Church Body, he was for fifteen years a Trustee of the "Quinn Charity," to which he devoted unsparing attention even up to the day of his death.

He was a cultured preacher and writer, and a poet of more than ordinary ability. By the members of the Warrenpoint and Newry congregations he was held in the highest esteem, and outside the denomination he possessed many friends in the district. His wife predeceased him three years ago, and he leaves to mourn his loss a daughter, Miss Mellone, of Warrenpoint, and a son, Dr. S. H. Mellone, M.A., D.SC., who was minister for some years of the Holywood Congregation, and, on the retirement of Rev. Alexander Gordon, M.A., after twenty-one years' service, was appointed Principal of the Unitarian Home Missionary College, Manchester.

Much sympathy is entertained for them in their bereavement. The funeral took place on Wednesday at the burying-ground of the First Presbyterian Church, Warrenpoint.

The chief mourners were Rev. S. H. Mellone, M.A., D.SC., and Miss Mellone. A service was held in the church, at which a brief address was delivered by Rev. Alexander Gordon, M.A., and Rev. M. S. Dunbar, M.A., read the Scripture lesson. The service at the graveside was conducted by Rev. George J. Slipper. There was a large attendance of ministers, including all the Protestant clergy of Warrenpoint, and the general public present embraced leading and representative citizens of Newry and Warrenpoint. Miss L. M'Combe (Newry) presided at the organ. A memorial service was held in the church on the following Sunday. The service was opened with hymn 50, "O God, our help in ages past" after which prayer was offered by the Rev. George J. Slipper, Unitarian minister, Newry The Rev. S. H. Mellone, M.A., D.SC., Principal of the Unitarian Home Missionary College, Manchester (son of the late Rev. W. E. Mellone) then read portions of the 11th and 12th chapters of Ecclesiastes, and this was followed by hymn 388, "For ever with the Lord." Portions of the 10th and 11th chapters of the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews were next read by the Rev. Alex. Gordon, M.A., ex-Principal of the Unitarian Home Mis-

sionary College, Manchester. Hymn 212, "The Saints on earth and those above," was then sung, after which the Rev. Mr. Gordon, who spoke without notes, delivered a sermon appropriate to the occasion.

* *

MISS MINNIE ALLEN.

It is with deep regret we announce the death of Miss Minnie Allen, daughter of James and Susan Allen, 59 Farnham Street, Belfast. Miss Allen was connected with York Street Church, of which, following the faithful example of her parents and grandparents, she became a devoted supporter as a prominent, indefatigable worker, ready at all times to serve the cause; and especially her presence will be greatly missed by the congregation in connection with choral work; she was the leading contralto in the Choir, constant in her attendance at the services, and was highly esteemed and appreciated as a singer by all. By her gentle ways, her kindly spirit, and fervent enthusiasm she had grown to be beloved by the old and the young of the Church; her modest and genial disposition had won a host of friends, as was seen by the large concourse on the day of the funeral. She was faithful to the end, though her illness of late prevented her from taking any active part; she loved the Church and all pertaining to it, and was a Unitarian to the core, ready always to give a reason for the faith and hope she cherished with meekness and holy fear. But as the bloom of life was opening to fulness, it faded and died. She passed away in her 23rd year, mourned by a mother and sister and a large circle of friends. On Sunday, the 22nd ult., her remains were conveyed and laid to rest in Moneyrea, the Rev. J. D. Davis, Clough, officiating.

SUSTENTATION FUND.

ANTRIM CONGREGATION.

Rev. W. S. Smith	£5	0	0
J. S. Hunter	5	0	0
W. H. Hunter	5	0	0
Rev G. V. Crook	5	0	0
Edward Harkness	2	0	0
Miss Smith	1	0	0
Mrs. Semple	£3	0	0
Robert Gray	3	0	0
John Gray	1	0	0
Robert Downey	1	0	0
Mrs. Hay	0	10	0
Wm. M'Quillan	0	4	0

CAIRNCASTLE.

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Reports.

Unity Guild.—An interesting excursion was held on Saturday, July 5th. By kind permission of the directors of The Salt Union, Ltd., a visit was paid to the company's Duncrue Mine, at Carrickfergus. Some members of the party regretted that they had not provided against the vagaries of our insular climate, as a very heavy shower, which lasted for half an hour or more, was not conducive to the enjoyment of a walk on country roads. Arriving at the Mine, we found an iron bucket at the head of the shaft, in which we were informed the descent would be made, and as a consequence one or two of the more nervous members of the party decided to remain above ground. Donning linen cloaks, that had once been white, the descent was made in parties of four, the quartette standing face to face. Although only 1,000 feet, the descent occupied just over two minutes, during which period the occupants of the bucket had to stand perfectly still for fear of scraping themselves against the side of the shaft. Arrived at the entrance to the workings, each member of the party was presented with a lighted candle, and in the hands of a guide, exploration was proceeded with. Contrary to expectations, the roof of the workings was a good sixty feet from our heads, and the ventilation was excellent, whilst there was an absence

of glistening whiteness which some of us had anticipated. Several shots were fired for our benefit, and to demonstrate how the miners commenced operations, while some blue lights, which the President had thoughtfully brought, were burnt, so that we might have a good sight of the workings. Before returning to terra firma our guide presented each explorer with a specimen of the salt rock as a memento of the visit. On reaching the mouth of the shaft once more, we were in brilliant sunshine, and obtained a delightful view over the Lough. Returning to the ancient town of Carrick, we were all ready for the excellent tea which was waiting us at the Y.M.C.A Cafe, and towards the enjoyment of which the strawberries and cream, kindly furnished by Mr. and Mrs. Cleland, no doubt contributed. The next excursion will be early in September, to Dundrum, particulars of which will be announced in due course.

* *

Ballycarry.—The annual School Féte in connection with the Old Presbyterian Church, Ballycarry, was held on Tuesday, the 24th of June. The weather in the early part of the day threatened to be unfavourable, but the afternoon was fine and sunshiny, so that the children and young people of the congregation were enabled to enjoy themselves on the field. Tea was served at 2 o'clock, after which the children, numbering over eighty, formed into a procession, and, headed by the Ballycarry Bands, and escorted by their teachers, marched through the village. The afternoon was spent in games and racing on the field, which was kindly lent by Mr. John M'Kee. There were numerous prizes and many successful competitors. At 5 o'clock each child was given a bag of cakes and sweets, and also a special prize was presented for regular attendance at school during the year. The evening was given up to games and dancing, which last was kept up until dark. The success of the féte was due to those teachers and friends who undertook the arrangements, among whom were Mrs. W. Millar, the Misses Service, Hamilton, Paisley, Robinson, Nelson, also Messrs. W. Millar, A. Millar, A. Burns, J. Colquhoun, A. Ellis, J. Magowan, W. Millar (jun.), and others.

* *

Ballyclare.—On Sunday evening a Floral Service was held in this Church, which was tastefully decorated with a choice collection of plants and flowers. The special preacher was Rev. H. J. Rossington, B.D. (Belfast), who took as his text St. Matthew vi. 28, "Consider the lilies of the field." Special music was rendered by an augmented choir, and Mr. R. J. Moore (Belfast) rendered the hymn "Nearer, my God, to Thee" with great feeling. Mr. Holmes, Organist of Larne Unitarian Church, presided at the organ.

* *

Belfast Domestic Mission.—Our Missionary, Rev. F. Woolley, has just been officially appointed one of the chaplains at the Crumlin Road Gaol.

* *

Downpatrick.—We take the following extract from the "Down Recorder"—"We are pleased to hear that our popular young townsman, Mr. Kenneth Dunbar, at Queen's University, Belfast, has taken his B.A. degree with first class honours in philosophy. He is entering the Manchester College, Oxford, in preparation for the Unitarian ministry."

* *

Greyabbey (Co. Down).—The Rev. Thomas Munn, having received an invitation to become the minister of the Padiham congregation, Lancashire, and having asked the Presbytery of Antrim to release him from his charge of the Greyabbey congregation, the Presbytery acceded to his desire, and the pulpit is in charge of the Presbytery of Antrim, of which Rev. Alexander O. Ashworth is the clerk.

* *

Larne and Kilwaughter.—The annual Sunday School excursion was held on Tuesday, 8th July. The place of venue was Garron Tower. The number of conveyances which left the Sunday School was ten, three of which were occupied by the Kilwaughter contingent. The number of scholars, teachers, and friends exceeded expectation, and it was a satisfaction to those concerned

with the arrangements to know that it was the largest of our excursions for four or five years. The brakes started about 10 o'clock, and after a most enjoyable drive under favourable conditions of weather, arrived at Garron Tower about one o'clock. Tea was in readiness, and was served with dexterity and courtesy by the energetic manager and his staff of servants. After justice had been done to the good things provided, all adjourned to the beautiful grounds, where some indulged in various amusements, such as dancing, racing for prizes, football, &c., while some of the more staid members enjoyed themselves in walking round or seating themselves where the splendid scenery could be observed to the best advantage. About 5 o'clock the children were gathered together to partake of lemonade and cake, after which it was time to think of leaving for Larne. The homeward journey commenced about 6 o'clock, and after another enjoyable drive, marred only by a slight shower, all arrived safely home about 9 o'clock. The excursion was in charge of Messrs. Frank Wright, Richard M'Keown, and Thomas Pullin, who did not spare themselves to make the outing the success it undoubtedly was.

* *

Newry.—A Garden Party and Cake Fair was held in the Manse Grounds on Wednesday, June 25th, the proceeds of which were devoted to the fund being raised for the complete renovation of the church, which has become necessary. The weather was delightfully fine, and there was a large attendance, including amongst the members themselves a large company of friends from all the churches in the town. The Rev. G. J. Slipper presided, and in introducing the gentleman who was to declare the Sale open, briefly thanked and welcomed all who were present, and explained the object of the fund. Mr. George R. Armstrong, J.P., in opening the Sale, said he felt greatly honoured by the invitation extended to him. The objects for which the proceedings were being held had been fully explained, and he need not dwell upon them, but he would like to say that he had had a fair experience of the career of the denominations in Newry, and he thought he was safe in saying there were few congregations in the town who made appeals to the public so seldom as that congregation. It would be like carrying coals to Newcastle to tell the members of the congregation that the First Presbyterian (Unitarian) Church was a most historic church in Newry. The building itself was one of the architectural features of the town, and was now, as it had always been since its erection, greatly admired by strangers and tourists. It was a most lovely church, but those who were acquainted with the career of the architect knew that the gentleman who designed the Ulster Hall in Belfast was one from whom they should expect something in the nature of an artistic Church in Newry. The congregation had a notable history. Many of the leading families of Newry had been connected with it, and some of the most distinguished names in the annals of Newry had been those of members of that congregation. It would, therefore, be a thousand pities if the congregation were not supported by the public in their efforts to keep that church. And their reason for enlisting the help of the public was that the present minister of the church was very popular, and well liked by everybody in the town. Mr. Slipper had identified himself with the social life of the town, and had never, so far as he could hear, or see, refused to give his very best towards the promotion of everything that was right and proper in the town, and that ought to be supported by a Christian minister. He was also quite aware that Mr. Slipper was exceedingly popular both with his clerical brethren and with the members of other denominations in the town. With these remarks he coupled the names of Mrs. Slipper, who was remarkable for her energy, her hard work, and for her absorbing interest in everything with which she identified herself. He urged all to help as liberally as they could, and formally declared the Sale open. Mr. Walter Scott moved a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Armstrong for attending to open the Sale, and Mr. Warnock

seconded the motion, which was carried with applause. The sales of cakes, eggs, and plants were then proceeded with, and ready purchasers were soon found. Half-hour concerts were held, and proved most successful, many friends, including Revs. S. E. Bowen and J. G. Davies, contributing songs and recitations. In addition to these there was a refreshment stall, Ping Pong tournaments were held, and Aunt Sally and shooting gallery also. Badminton found many votaries, and altogether a sum of £25 was realised. Amongst the stallholders were—Mrs. Slipper, Mrs. J. Thompson, Mrs. Henning, The Misses Warnock, Miss May Thompson, Miss Beck, Miss M'Cullough, Miss M'Lelland, Misses Sarah and Maggie Mitchell, Miss L. M'Combe, Miss Scott, Miss S. Megaw, Eileen M'Combe ; Messrs. James and Andrew Thompson, H. Wilson, Isaac, Joseph, and W. J. Moore, R. J. M'Combe, Albert Megaw, W. J. Blair, C. Warnock, W. Scott, H. Lyons..

Newtownards.—The sixteenth Annual Floral Service was held on Sunday, June 22nd. The church had been tastefully decorated by the Choir and a number of willing helpers, and looked well. The service having to be held earlier this year, and the previous weather not having been good for flowers, it had been feared that the supply would have been hardly sufficient for our needs. But so great was the enthusiasm of our own people, and so kind were the friends of other congregations, that a full and ample supply was forthcoming. There was a fine and appreciative congregation. A good sermon was given by Rev. D. J. Williams, of Killinchy, and the hymns were heartily sung by the congregation and Choir. An anthem, "Behold! how good and pleasant a thing it is," was sung as a quartette by Misses Thornberry and Nora King, Messrs. H. Mawhinney and Rev. R. M. King. A special collection was taken to assist the congregation in providing heating apparatus for the church. The Organist, Miss Ferguson, presided, and played the accompaniments to the hymns with taste.

Presbytery of Templepatrick.—This Presbytery met on Thursday, 17th July, in the Central Hall, Belfast. Rev. Felix Holt, B.A., of Ballymoney, was nominated a licencer of marriages within the bounds of the Presbytery, and Mr. Hugh Nelson Turner, of Templepatrick, was taken under the care of the Presbytery as a candidate for the Christian ministry.

* *

Templepatrick.—On Sunday, June 29th, a special service was held in the Roughfort School, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The school-room was nicely decorated with flowers. Rev. Percival Godding, of Ballyclare, delivered an interesting address, and Mr. J. Campbell sang two solos. The scholars of the Sunday-school acted in the capacity of choir, and led the singing of the hymns. Miss Getty presided at the piano. There was a good attendance, and the collection taken on the occasion was liberal, and will greatly help the incidental expenses of the Sunday School.

Echoes.

American Quakers are objecting against the use of their name and religion to advertise commercial articles, especially in the case of whiskey and other liquids, and are consequently formally protesting against such use. The matter was brought before the annual convention of the Society of Friends in New York last month, and it was then resolved that legislation should be framed prohibiting the use of the name of any religious denomination as a trademark. One remarked that if Quaker whiskey, why not Baptist beer, and if your car is equipped with Quaker tyres, why not carry a Presbyterian pocket-book ; and another said, "If your wife's dress is trimmed with Quaker lace, why not buy a Lutheran looking-glass for her?" Could we not add that as so many of us enjoy Quaker oats for breakfast, why not (say) a Unitarian soup for dinner. Of course it would have to refer to a rich, wholesome soup, and not to an insipid watery concoction.

We suppose it will be a long time before the "colour prejudice" is a thing of the past. Two of America's most distinguished coloured citizens have recently had a most painful and distressing experience in London. The Rev. Dr. Borden, of New York, and Professor Eichelberger, Principal of Walter's Institute, Arkansas, were on their way to Zurich to attend the World's Sunday School Convention. But in London, to their surprise, they were both refused admission to several well-known hotels. Only after great difficulty did they at last succeed in getting accommodation in an out-of-the way private hotel. Comments are needless, and it is difficult to know whether to censure the proprietors or the patrons these try to please.

* *

A certain writer in Scribner's is objecting to weather vanes to Churches. His objection is worth quoting:—"In the village where I live there is one thing that troubles me because of its unfortunate symbolism. The church spire is tipped by a weather vane; iron rods, diverging from a centre, bear gilded letters—N, E, S, W, which point this way and that, veering with every wind that blows. It keeps getting in my line of vision, as I look from the green hill to westward, and see, beyond the grass-grown path and the deep-foliaged trees, its gilded letters shining significantly in the sun. I cannot get away from it! And it gives its inevitable suggestion of unstable force, enduring at most but a few hours. As I passed, on a clouded day last week, religion seemed nor'-nor'-east, while on yesterday's sunny afternoon faith was blowing due south. How it whips about in a real gale! When will the Churches take off their weather-vanes, and leave their spires pointing to the north star?"

* *

Sir,—In the interests of accuracy, may I point out that the beautiful hymn "Calmly, calmly lay him down," which was sung at Canon Barnett's funeral on Saturday, was not written for the occasion? As the author was the Rev. W. Gaskell, a Unitarian minister, and husband of the author of "Cranford," it appears in our positivist hymn-book and probably in Unitarian hymnals.

All who were present at the impressive service on Saturday must have felt its striking appropriateness to the good man whose bodily presence has been taken from us, but whose influence will never die."

J. Frederick Green.

Outer Temple, W.C., June 23.

The above letter was sent to the editor of the "Daily News." The hymn may be found in the New Hymnal, No. 473.

* *

We suppose superstition is to be met with everywhere, but the writer was curiously astounded to meet with a farmer's wife who really and truly believed in the efficacy of a charm fastened to the bottom of her churn.

Mentioning this to a friend brought to my notice "Home Life in Ireland," by Robert Lynd (popular edition, 4/6), which, among other delightful essays, gives one on "Superstitions and Stories (or whatever you like to call them)." He mentions many butter-stealing spells, and the putting of a pinch of salt in pure milk before presenting to a poor neighbour. But a girl tells a curious story to the author: "There was a woman," she said, "living not far from her father's, who was noticed getting a powerful lot of butter off her few cows. One day her mother determined to get to the heart of the mystery, and went to the woman's house. She said, when she came home, that she had found the woman standing on a creepie stool with her head down into the churn and her rosary in her hand. 'It was praying she was,' she declared, 'but maybe to the devil.'" This good soul hailed from Meath.

* *

We are indebted to the *Christian Life* for the following story:—A dispute once arose between two Scotsmen, named Campbell and M'Lean, upon the antiquity of their families. The latter would not allow that the Campbells had any right to rank with the M'Leans in antiquity, who, he insisted, were in

existence as a clan since the beginning of the world. Campbell had a little more Biblical knowledge than his antagonist, and asked him if the clan of the M'Leans was before the flood. "Flood! what flood?" asked M'Lean. "The flood, you know, that drowned all the world but Noah and his family and his flock," said Campbell. "Pooh! you and your flood," said M'Lean; "my clan was afore the flood." "I have not read in my Bible," said Campbell, "of the name of M'Lean going into Noah's Ark." "Noah's Ark!" retorted the other, in contempt, "Who ever heard of a M'Lean that hadn't a boat of his ain?"

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